

JULY No. 42

10¢

QUALITY
BOOKS
PUBLICATION

BLACKHAWK

52 BIG FULL WIDTH
PAGES

The astounding
tale of the
IRON EMPEROR!





WEB COMIC
UNIVERSE.COM



BUD, COULD I GET A WRIST WATCH THE SAME EASY WAY YOU GOT THAT AIR RIFLE

YOU SURE CAN SIS, ALSO DOLLS BICYCLES AND MANY OTHER THINGS, JUST MAIL COUPON TO START, LIKE I DID



LOOK, BUD - WILSON SENT WHITE CLOVERINE BRAND SALVE AND EVERYTHING. I DIDN'T HAVE TO SEND A PENNY NOW I'LL GET MY WRISTWATCH



THANKS, SIS, THIS IS A WONDERFUL ART PICTURE THAT YOU'RE GIVING ME WITH THIS FINE SALVE



IT SURE IS - I'M GOING TO GET A BIKE NEXT



**VALUABLE
PREMIUMS**

GIVEN

BOYS! GIRLS!

PREMIUMS

BOYS • GIRLS • MEN • LADIES

**Be First!
ACT
NOW!**



**BE
FIRST**



**WE
ARE
RELIABLE**

GENUINE .22 CAL. RIFLES, 1000 Shot Daisy Air Rifles (with tube of shot), Cameras, Foothills, Telescopes, complete Fishing Kits, Movie Machines (sent postage paid). Simply Give beautiful pictures with White CLOVERINE Brand SALVE used for chaps and mild burns and easily sold to friends, neighbors, relatives at 25c a box (with picture) and remit amount asked under Premium shown in catalog sent with your order postage paid by us to start. Mail coupon below.

DOLLS, FULLY DRESSED, Over 15" in height, Wrist Watches, Pocket Watches, Blankets, Alarm Clocks, Aluminum Ware, Bibles, Pen & Pencil sets (sent postage paid). Other Premiums or Cash Commissions. Big catalog lists many other personal and household premiums. So don't delay getting what you want. MAIL COUPON NOW!

BICYCLES (boys—girls), Coaster Wagons (sent express charges collect), Flashlights, School boxes (sent postage paid). Easy fun to get 'em. NO MONEY NOW. We send art pictures, salve, catalog on trust to start. Write today!

WILSON CHEMICAL COMPANY
Dept. 188-GF, Tyrone, Pa.

CASH COMMISSIONS

GIVEN

**MAIL
THIS
COUPON
TODAY**

**MAIL THIS COUPON
SEND NO MONEY NOW
WE TRUST YOU**

Wilson Chemical Co., Dept. 188-GF, Tyrone, Pa. Date

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Name Age

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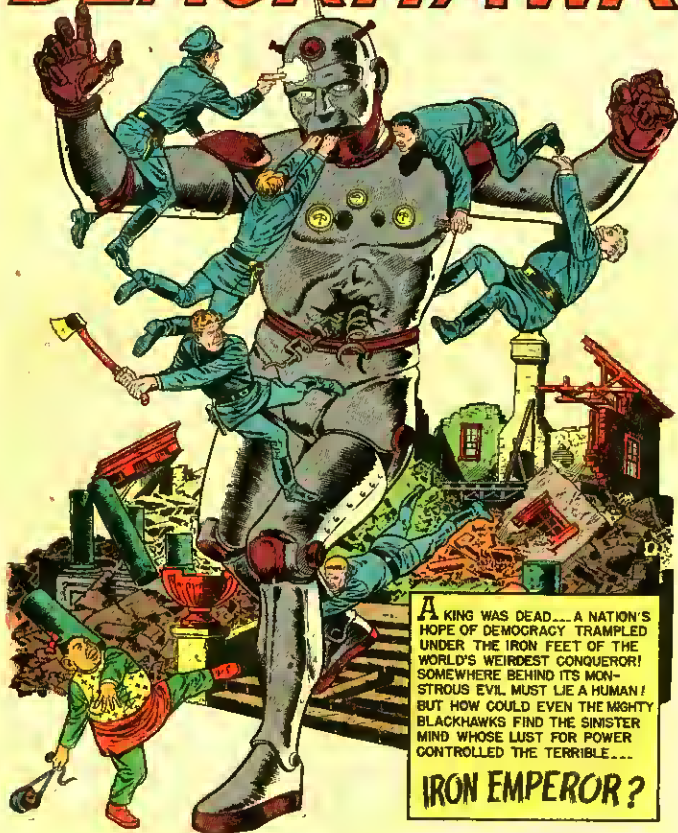
Town Zone State

First Last Name

PRIZE COUPON ON POSTAL PAID BY MAIL IN ENVELOPE TODAY

BLACKHAWK

BLACKHAWK



A KING WAS DEAD.... A NATION'S HOPE OF DEMOCRACY TRAMPLED UNDER THE IRON FEET OF THE WORLD'S WEIRDEST CONQUEROR! SOMEWHERE BEHIND ITS MONSTROUS EVIL MUST LIE A HUMAN! BUT HOW COULD EVEN THE MIGHTY BLACKHAWKS FIND THE SINISTER MIND WHOSE LUST FOR POWER CONTROLLED THE TERRIBLE...

IRON EMPEROR?

**IN THE LITTLE KINGDOM OF VOSLIA A
BLONDED EMPEROR LIES DYING!**

...DR. NERDA, THE ROYAL PHYSICIAN
REPORTS THAT HIS MAJESTY GROWS
STEADILY WEAKER! HE CANNOT LAST
THROUGH THE NIGHT!



BLACKHAWK

SCENE IN THE ROYAL BEDCHAMBER...

PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY! YOU
MUST NOT EXERT YOUR-
SELF...

QUIET, NERDA! I'M BEYOND YOUR
PILLS AND ADVICE NOW! HELP
ME TO THE BALCONY QUICKLY! I
MUST SEE MY PEOPLE ONCE
MORE!



YOUR
MAJESTY!

HEAR ME, MY PEOPLE! TONIGHT MY
KINGDOM DIES WITH ME! IT IS MY
LAST COMMAND THAT THERE BE
NO SUCCESSOR TO MY THRONE!
VOSLIA MUST BECOME A
DEMOCRACY!



PRINCESS TOLIA, COUNT VASHIL AND
GENERAL HUNZIA WILL GUIDE YOU UNTIL
YOU ELECT A GOVERNMENT! IF ANY
THREATEN YOUR FREEDOM, SEND FOR
MY FRIENDS, THE BLACKHAWKS,
WHO... ARGHHH!

YOUR
MAJESTY...!

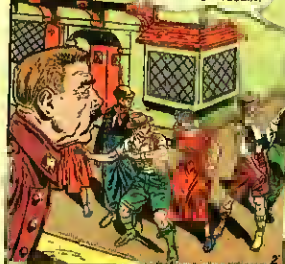


PEOPLE OF VOSLIA, YOUR
EMPEROR IS GONE...!
GUARD WELL HIS TRUST!



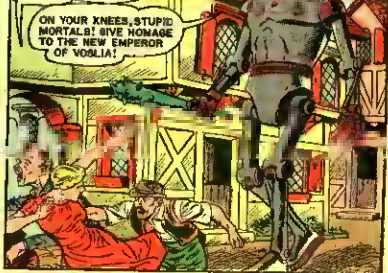
Suddenly...

MAKE WAY, SLAVES!
WAY FOR THE IRON
EMPEROR OF VOSLIA!



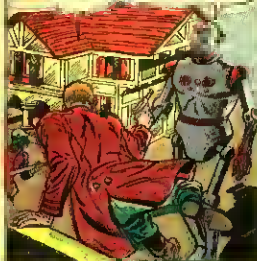
EEEEHHH! A MONSTER!
FLEE FOR YOUR LIVES!

ON YOUR KNEES, STUPID
MORTALS! GIVE HOMAGE
TO THE NEW EMPEROR
OF VOSLIA!



BLACKHAWK

GUARDS! BLOCK THE WAY! DESTROY THE MAD MACHINE

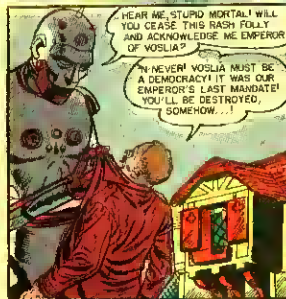


HO HO HO! WHAT MORTAL FOLLY IS THIS? THE IRON EMPEROR IS INVINCIBLE!

KEEP FIRING! TRY TO SMASH ITS MECHANISM!



HA HA HA! YOU AMUSE ME, POOR WEAKLINGS!



HEAR ME, STUPID MORTAL! WILL YOU CEASE THIS RASH FOLLY AND ACKNOWLEDGE ME EMPEROR OF VOSLIA?

NO! NEVER! VOSLIA MUST BE A DEMOCRACY! IT WAS OUR EMPEROR'S LAST MANDATE! YOU'LL BE DESTROYED, SOMEHOW...

THEN YOU ARE TOO STUPID TO BE OF VALUE TO ME!



ARGH!

AS ALWAYS, A FEW COWARDS AND WEAKLINGS FAWN ON THEIR CONQUEROR!

HO! THEN THERE ARE A FEW SENSIBLE VOSLIANS, AFTER ALL! TAKE ME TO YOUR DUNGEONS, AND I'LL FIND A FEW MORE!



BLACKHAWK! MUST... REACH RADIO... SUMMON BLACK-HAWK!

AN HOUR LATER, HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD AT BLACKHAWK ISLAND...

YUMPIRS YENOGAPHATI HAS SHOT THREE BULLSEYES IN ROW FOR BLACK...



SAPRIS! QUIET M'SIEBS! ZERE IS A VERY FAINT DISTRESS CALL COMING IN

GENERAL HUNZA CALLING BLACKHAWKS! HELP US! EMPEROR OF VOSLIA DEAD... COUNTRY SEIZED BY GIANT ROBOT, THE IRON EMPEROR! SAVE US!



ANDRE, TELL GENERAL HUNZA WE'RE ON OUR WAY! ARM FOR ACTION GANG!



BLACKHAWK

IF BIG FIGHTY-SCAP
START CHOP CHOP
MAKEE IRON
HAMBURGER

WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS
GIANT ROBOT BUSINESS IS
GANG SO HOOK THESE
POUCHES TO YOUR BELTS!
THEY MAY COME IN HANDY!



SUDDENLY...

BLACKHAWK, THIS IS THE IRON
EMPEROR! WHEN YOU LAND
COME TO THE PALACE READY
TO BOW ALLEGIANCE TO MY
INVINCIBLE MIGHT!

ACH, DU LIEBER...!
WHY, DOT TIN-PLATED
SMART ALECK...!



WE'LL LAND OPENLY AT VOSLIA AIR-
PORT, GANG! UNTIL WE KNOW THE
SCORE, WE CAN'T START HOSTILITIES!
BUT KEEP AN EYE OPEN FOR
TREACHERY!



A FEW HOURS LATER...

WELL, WHAT DO YOU KNOW,
BLACKHAWK! THE JOINT SEEMS
PEACEFUL ENOUGH! AND THAT
LOOKS LIKE A GUARD OF
HONOR FOR US!

OH A FIRING SQUAD CHUCK! I NEVER
SAW A CHOICER COLLECTION OF THUGS
AND GORILLAS IN UNIFORM! WATCH
YOUR STEP!



BLACKHAWK!
WAIT...

IT'S GENERAL
HUNZAI!

HALT!



THE IRON EMPEROR
IS... ARGHHHHH!!

DAS BAN OOLD-
BLOODED MURDER!

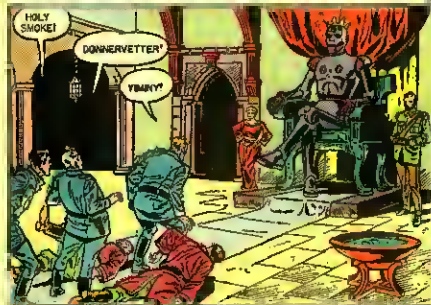
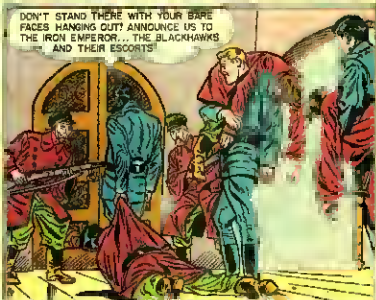
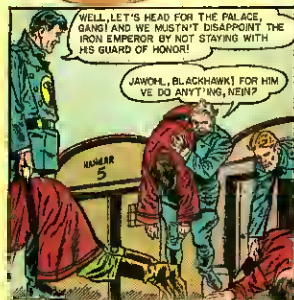


GET AWAY FROM HIM YOUR
ORDERS ARE TO PROCEED
DIRECT TO THE PALACE!
GET YOUR HANDS UP!

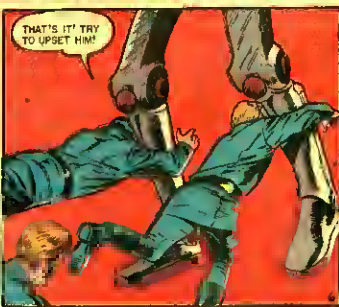
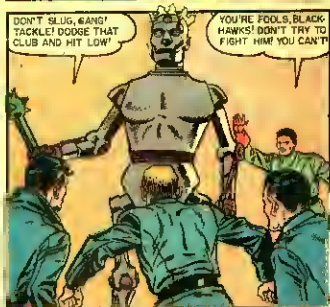
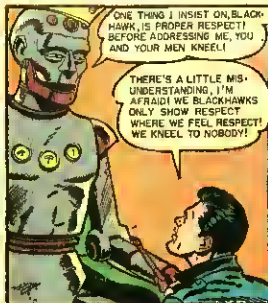
IF YOU'RE SURE THAT'S
WHAT YOU WANT, I CAN'T
REFUSE, FRIEND.



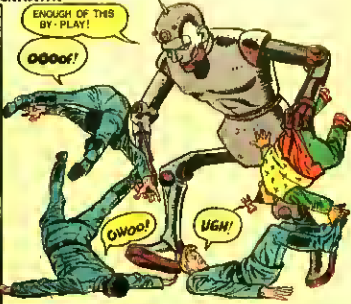
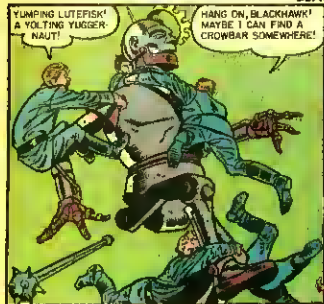
BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK

WHAT CAN WE DO? HE'S BULLET-PROOF, FIST-PROOF! MAYBE WE COULD BLOW HIM UP WITH A BLOCKBUSTER!

THAT'S WHY HE KEEPS PRINCESS TOLIA AND COUNT VASHIL NEAR HIM! ANY ATTEMPT TO BOMB HIM WOULD DESTROY THEM!



I'M MORE INTERESTED IN WHO'S BEHIND THE IRON EMPEROR! HE'S JUST A CLEVER MACHINE, OPERATED BY A FIENDISH HUMAN BRAIN BY REMOTE CONTROL!

BUT HE CAN TALK, MOVE, ANSWER QUESTIONS! MAYBE SOME LITTLE YERK CAN HIDE INSIDE AND YUGGLE LEVERS!

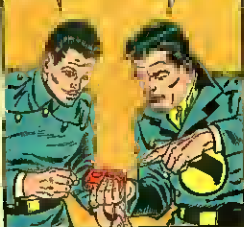


NO! NOBODY COULD STAY COOPED INSIDE FOR DAYS OLAF! IT'S RADIO CONTROLLED BY SOMEBODY RIGHT THERE WATCHING AND LISTENING! GIVE ME YOUR BELT RADIOS... QUICK!



SACRE NOM, BLACKHAWK! WHAT ARE YOU HOOKING ZE BELT RADIOS TOGETHER FOR?

I'M MAKING A MORE POWERFUL HIGH FREQUENCY TRANSMITTER, ANDRE!



THERE! MAYBE THE COMBINED POWER WILL BE ENOUGH TO JAM THE FREQUENCY THAT CONTROLS OUR ROBOT PAL! WE'LL SOON SEE!

JAWOHL! MY HIS RADIO SIGNALS MIXED, HE MIGHT RUN WILD, NEMO!



HERE GOES, GANG!

CLANK! CRASH! HALP!

YUPITER! SOMETHING BAN SOUNDS LIKE RIGHT UPSTAIRS!



WHY QUIT NOW, BLACKHAWK? GO AHEAD AND MAKE HIM WRECK THE JOINT!

NOT NOW, CHUCK! WE CAN'T DESTROY THE ROBOT UNTIL WE'VE FOUND THE BRAINS BEHIND HIM!

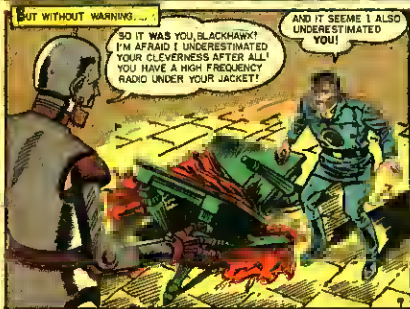
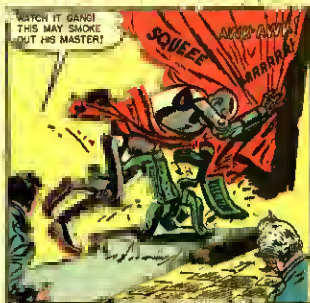
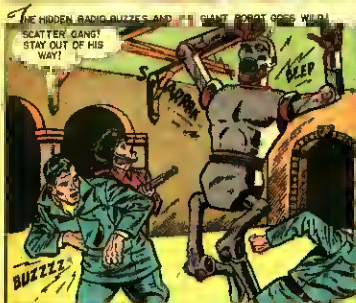


QUICK! SOMEBODY'LL BE COMING TO SEE IF WE'RE BEHIND WHAT HAPPENED TRY TO ACT DAZED AND HELPLESS!

IS NO ACT! CHOP CHOP! PLENTY HELPLESS LIGHT NOW!



BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK



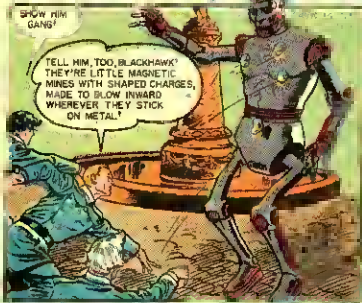
NOW I SHALL GIVE THESE STUPID HUMANS A TREAT! WHEN THEY SEE ME DESTROY THEIR LAST HOPE THEY'LL BE READY TO ACKNOWLEDGE ME THEIR EMPEROR!

READY WITH THOSE POUCHES GANG! THIS IS THE TIME TO USE THEM



WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW? WHAT DO YOU HAVE THERE IN YOUR HANDS?

STICK AROUND, BIG-IRON! YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT!



SHOW HIM GANG!

TELL HIM, TOO, BLACKHAWK! THEY'RE LITTLE MAGNETIC MINES WITH SHAPED CHARGES, MADE TO BLOW INWARD WHEREVER THEY STICK ON METAL!



BROTHER, I THOUGHT HE'D NEVER GET FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM PEOPLE SO WE'D DARE USE THOSE BOMBS!



FOOLS! IDIOTS! RUSH THEM! KILL THE BLACKHAWKS!

JUST GIVE US SOMETHING TO HIT, BY YIMIN!



PEOPLE OF VOGLIA! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? THE BLACKHAWKS DESTROYED THE IRON EMPEROR! THESE ARE ONLY MEN!

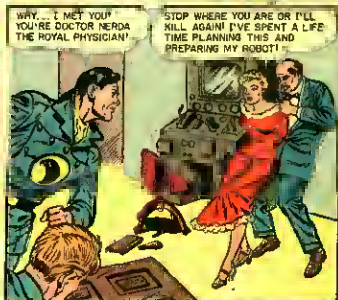
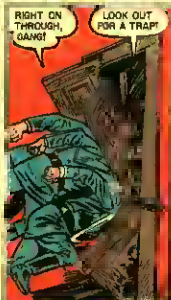
SMASH THEM! KILL OUR BETRAYERS!



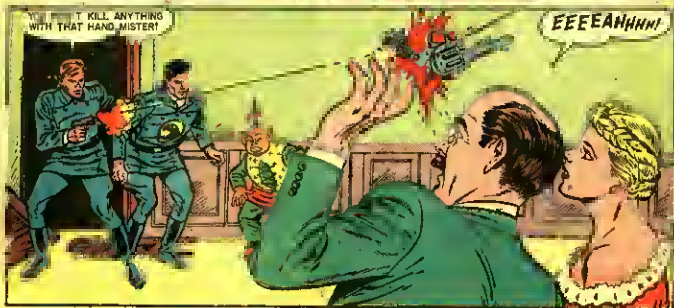
THIS WAY GANG! THAT FIGURE WHO YELLED FROM THE BALCONY IS THE ONE WE'RE AFTER!

THENS! I FEEL ALMOST SORRY FOR THE GUARDS BACK ZERE!

BLACKHAWK

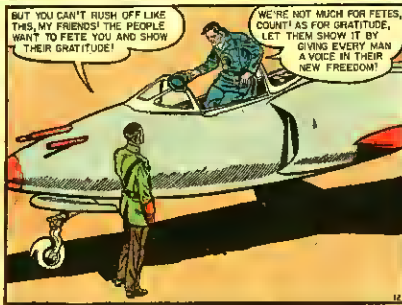
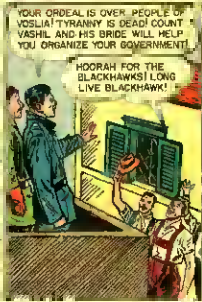
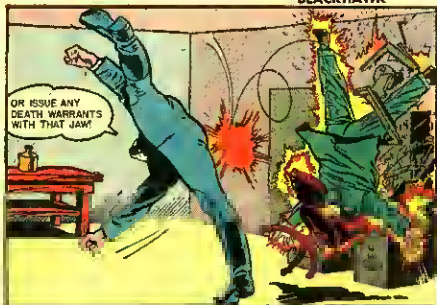


STOP WHERE YOU ARE OR I'LL KILL AGAIN! I'VE SPENT A LIFE TIME PLANNING THIS AND PREPARING MY ROBOT!



EEEEHHHHH!

BLACKHAWK



OR ISSUE ANY DEATH WARRANTS WITH THAT JAW!

HE WON'T STAND TRIAL! MY PUNCH KNOCKED HIM RIGHT INTO THE HIGH TENSION COILS!

HE GOT HIS ELECTRIC CHAIR! THE HARD WAY!

HERE BAN COUNT VASHIL! DAS RAT HAD HIM LOCKED UP IN DAS YUNK ROOM!

BLACKHAWKS! YOU'VE SAVED US! HE'S DEAD!

TOILA, MY DEAR LOVE! AT LAST WE ARE FREE TO MARRY AND LIVE IN A FREE NATION!

SAPRIST! AND I THOUGHT WE MIGHT WALK IN ZE MOON-LIGHT TONIGHT!

YOUR ORDEAL IS OVER. PEOPLE OF VOSLIA! TYRANNY IS DEAD! COUNT VASHIL AND HIS BRIDE WILL HELP YOU ORGANIZE YOUR GOVERNMENT!

HOORAH FOR THE BLACKHAWKS! LONG LIVE BLACKHAWK!

BUT YOU CAN'T RUSH OFF LIKE THIS, MY FRIENDS! THE PEOPLE WANT TO FETE YOU AND SHOW THEIR GRATITUDE!

WE'RE NOT MUCH FOR FETES, COUNT! AS FOR GRATITUDE, LET THEM SHOW IT BY GIVING EVERY MAN A VOICE IN THEIR NEW FREEDOM!

EVEN MONSTERS MADE OF STEEL OUR MIGHTY WRATH WILL FEEL! WE'RE BLACKHAWKS!

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BLACKHAWK

BLACKHAWK



THE FINEST FIGHTING MEN IN THE WORLD!
THAT'S THE BLACKHAWKS, FAMED SKY ADVENTURERS! BUT IN ALL THEIR GLORIOUS CAREERS IN COMBAT, THE BLACKHAWKS HAVE FACED ONLY DANGERS SPAWNED IN OUR PRESENT DAY! NOW THEY ARE ASKED TO MATCH THEIR PEEERLESS SKILLS AGAINST A MENACE THAT BELONGS TO THE PAST AND THE FUTURE IN...

THE CITY THAT TIME FORGOT

MANY ARE THE FATEFUL ASSIGNMENTS ENTRUSTED TO THE BLACKHAWKS!

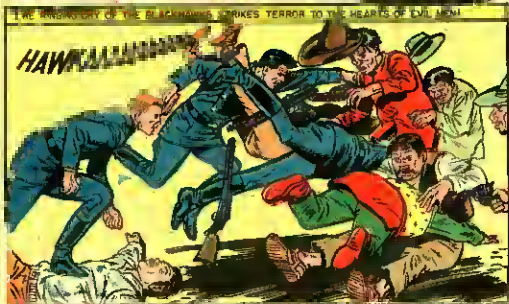
THESE DOCUMENTS CONTAIN THE COMPLETE RESULTS OF FIELD TESTS MADE HERE WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT'S WEAPON! THEY ALSO CONTAIN INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO ASSEMBLE AND OPERATE IT!

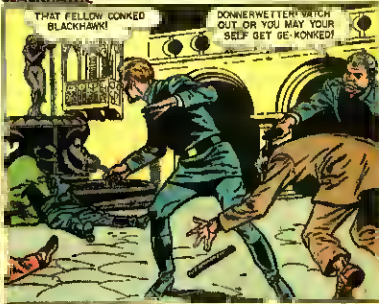
I UNDERSTAND, SIR!

WE'VE RECEIVED REPORTS THAT AN INTERNATIONAL SECRET AGENT NAMED MORDRED IS AFTER THESE DOCUMENTS! HE MUST NOT GET THEM! THAT IS WHY THE BLACKHAWKS WERE CHOSEN TO BRING THEM TO THEIR PROPER DESTINATION!



BLACKHAWK

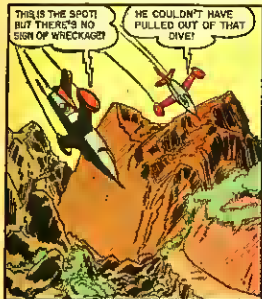




IN A SKY GAME OF HARES AND HOUNDS, MORDRED
FLIES FOR HIS LIFE!



BLACKHAWK



THIS IS THE SPOT!
BUT THERE'S NO
SIGN OF WRECKAGE!

HE COULDN'T HAVE
PULLED OUT OF THAT
DIVE!

SOMETHING PECU-
LIAR ABOUT THE
GROUND DOWN THERE!
IT'S A CAMOUFLAGE
JOB! SEE THE DIVID-
ING LINE THAT RUNS
BETWEEN THE
SURFACE ROCKS
AND SHRUBBERY?



LOOKS LIKE A
GIANT HINGE IN
THE MOUNTAIN
WALL! THERE MUST
BE A WAY TO GET IN
SIDE THE MOUNTAIN!
PEEL OFF!

AS THE BLACKHAWK PLANES APPROACH THE MOUNTAINSIDE...



WE GUESSED RIGHT! THAT
MOUNTAIN WALL MUST
OPERATE ON THE ELECTRIC
EYE PRINCIPLE! ANYTHING
APPROACHING IT BREAKS
THE ELECTRIC CONNec-
TION AND ROLLS UP
THE ENTRANCE WAY!



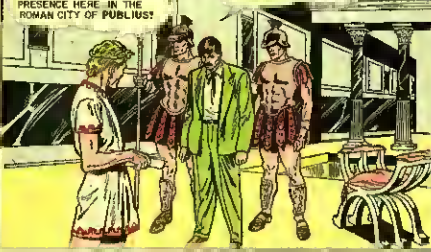
BY GAD, THERE
IS, MORDRED'S
PLANE!

BUT HE'S GONE! WE'D BETTER
PROCEED CAUTIOUSLY, GANG!
SOMETHING IS QUEER ABOUT
THIS PLACE!

MEANWHILE...

WE DO NOT WELCOME
STRANGERS FROM THE OUT-
SIDE WORLD! EXPLAIN YOUR
PRESENCE HERE IN THE
ROMAN CITY OF PUBLIUS!

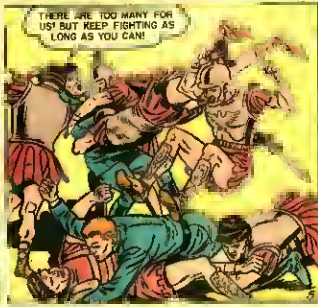
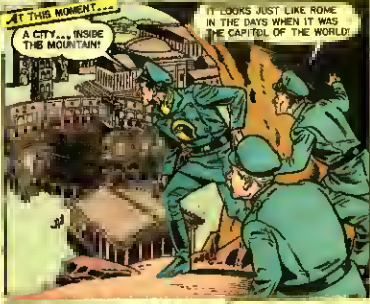
I WAS FLEEING FROM MEN
WHO WANTED TO KILL ME! I
DISCOVERED THIS PLACE BY
THE MEREST ACCIDENT!



YOU WERE FLEEING FROM
BARBARIANS, HUH? THIS CITY
WAS BUILT AS A REFUGE
FROM SUCH VANDALS! IT
IS BECAUSE OF THEM THAT
WE STILL SHUN CONTACT
WITH THE OUTSIDE
WORLD!

YOU ARE WISE!
THESE...UHL...
BARBARIANS
WILL STOP AT NOTHING
TO GET WHAT
THEY WANT!

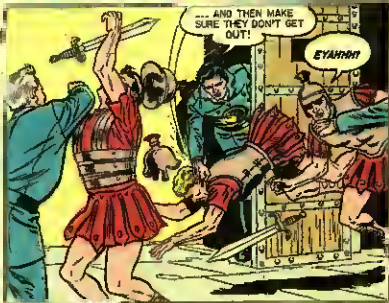
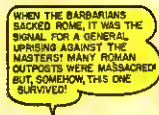
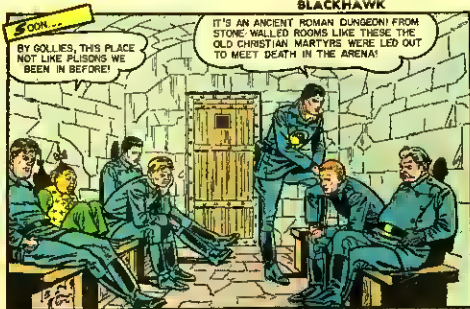




WHEN THE UNEQUAL BATTLE ENDS...



BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK



LEA-CH! CHOP CHOP MADE A MISTAKE THIS TIME!



THAT ARMOR PROTECTS THEM! BUT IT MAKES THEM CLUMSY, TOO!

THEES EES CALLED LA SAVATE IN MY COUNTRY!



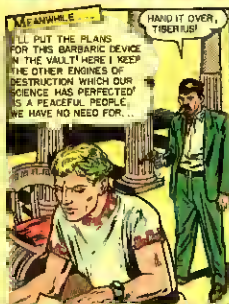
SOON THE BLACKHAWKS HAVE THE SITUATION UNDER CONTROL. GET INTO THESE ROMAN COSTUMES! IT WILL KEEP US FROM ATTRACTING ATTENTION UNTIL WE FIND MORDRED AGAIN!

OH ME, OH WINE! HEAD IS VELLY DIZZY, YOU 'BETCHA!



STAY HERE AND GUARD THESE FELLOWS CHOP CHOP! AND DON'T TRY ANY MORE HEAD BUTTING!

WE DO HEAD-CUTTING IF THEY MAKE TROUBLE!



MEANWHILE... I'LL PUT THE PLANS FOR THIS BARBARIC DEVICE IN THE VAULT! HERE I KEEP THE OTHER ENGINES OF DESTRUCTION WHICH OUR SCIENCE HAS PERFECTED! WE ARE A PEACEFUL PEOPLE. WE HAVE NO NEED FOR...

HAND IT OVER, TIBERIUS!



WHAT MANNER OF JEST IS THIS?

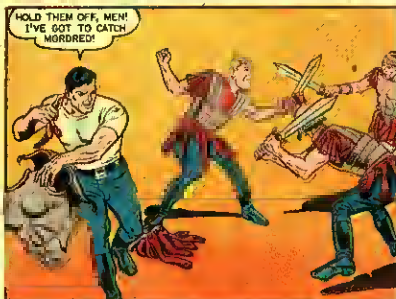
MY LEADERS WILL PAY WELL FOR THOSE PLANS! IT WILL MEAN POWER... THE POWER TO DESTROY SPEELESS WEAKLINGS LIKE YOURSELF! HAND IT OVER... OR I'LL KILL YOU!

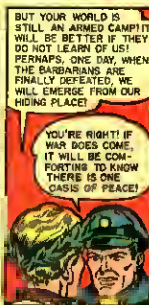
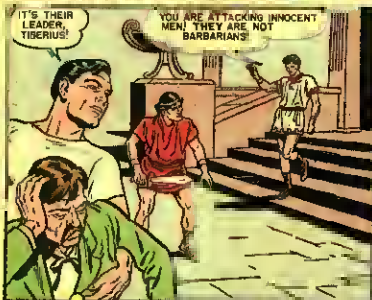


I'LL SUMMON MY GUARDS! HELP!

I FORGOT ABOUT THAT TINY LOUD-SPEAKER! IF ANYONE HEARD HIM, I'LL NEVER GET AWAY!

BLACKHAWK





BLACKHAWK



A

NEW MENACE, GREATER THAN ALL, THREATENS FREE PEOPLES!

NOT MEN, BUT WHOLE CITIES, ARE BLASTED AWAY AS IT ADVANCES!

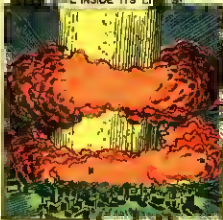
MUST FREEDOM AND JUSTICE BOW AND ADMIT DEFEAT BEFORE A FORCE OF DESTRUCTION AS MYSTERIOUS AS IT IS COMPLETE?

THE BLACKHAWKS CHALLENGE THE BLACK FATE THAT HAS MARKED LIAPORE, CAPITOL CITY OF KARASTAH AS

THE CITY THAT MUST PERISH!!!

A

BORDER TOWN OF THE FREE COUNTRY OF KARASTAH, FORTIFIED AGAINST AGGRESSION, IS BLASTED TO FRAGMENTS WITH BOMBING INSIDE ITS LIMITS.



A

AT ONCE, A BROADCAST TO THE SHOCKED PEOPLE...

THE GOVERNMENT OF KARASTAH ANNOUNCES THAT THE DESTROYED CITY GIVES OFF RADIOACTIVE IMPULSES! IT WAS A NEW FORM OF ATOMIC BOMB! ALL DEFENSE OFFICIALS ARE ALERTED!

THEY CAN'T HEAR THE BROADCAST! AN UNKNOWN RADIO IS JAMMING US AND SEND-OUT ITS OWN MESSAGE!



BLACKHAWK

THE WORRIED LEADERS OF THE NATION CONFER...

HERE'S THE MYSTERY BROADCAST!

PEOPLE OF KARASTAN, THAT DESTRUCTION OF THE BORDER FORT WAS A MERE EXPERIMENT! TO SHOW WHAT WE CAN REALLY DO, WE'LL DESTROY THE FACTORY TOWN OF PLUCITAR TONIGHT! STOP US IF YOU CAN!

DOUBLE ALL MILITARY GUARDS AT PLUCITAR, GENERAL! WE MUST NOT LET THE CATASTROPHE STRIKE AGAIN!

SEE, O PRESIDENT! THE PLANES OF OUR FRIENDS, THE BLACK-HAWKS!



A QUICK COUNCIL WITH THE GREAT FIGHTERS FOR FREEDOM...

WE SUSPECT THE ANCIENT REGIME OF KARASTAN'S TYRANTS OF TRYING THIS CRUEL WAY TO REGAIN POWER!

WE REMEMBER THOSE TYRANTS, YOUR EXCELLENCY! WE HELPED DEFEAT THEM AND FORM THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

THAT SERVES KARASTAN TODAY! WHAT EVIDENCE HAVE YOU TO GO ON?



WE HOPE TO INTERCEPT TONIGHT'S RAID AND CAPTURE A PRISONER WHO WILL TELL US THE ENEMY PLAN!

ALAS, O PRESIDENT! DREADFUL NEWS FROM PLUCITAR



DESPITE OUR PLANS AND TROOPS, THE CITY WAS DESTROYED AT SUNDOWN! MANY WERE SLAIN AND INJURED! EVEN NOW THE MYSTERIOUS RADIO SPEAKS!

LET US HEAR IT!



YOU CANNOT STOP US WHEN WE SMASH YOUR CITIES! WE GIVE THE USURPING GOVERNMENT ONE DAY TO ABDICATE... OR LIARORE, YOUR CAPITOL, WILL BE BLOWN INTO NOTHINGNESS!

PERHAPS I SHOULD RESIGN AND SAVE THIS CITY AND ITS PEOPLE!



NO! DON'T DESERT YOUR POST! THAT WOULD THROW KARASTAN INTO DISORDER... AND THEN INTO THE HANDS OF TYRANTS AGAIN!

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO, BLACKHAWK? THERE IS BUT ONE DAY GRANTED US FOR ACTION! TOMORROW WILL SEE MORE RUIN!



BLACKHAWK

THE WORD GOES OUT TO MOVE AWAY FROM THREATENED LIAPORE...

LET US HAVE THIS LAST DAY TO SEE WHAT WE CAN DO! WE'VE SOLVED GREAT PROBLEMS BEFORE!

I GRANT THAT REQUEST! BUT I SHALL ORDER THE CITY TO BE EVACUATED AT ONCE!



THE CITY IS DESERTED, LIFELESS EXCEPT FOR ONE DAUNTLESS GROUP OF MEN... THE BLACKHAWKS!

EVERYTHING SO QUIET LIKE GHOST TOWN! IS CREEPY, SCARY!

WE'RE GOING TO END AND STOP THESE CITY-SMASHERS' CHOP CHOP! ATTENTION TO MY PLAN, MEN!



THE GUARDS AT PLUC-TAR COULDN'T KEEP AWAY THE RAIDERS! THAT'S BECAUSE THERE WERE NO RAIDERS! AGENTS WITHIN THE TOWN SET OFF THE EXPLOSION!



GRAND CIEL! YOU THENK LIAPORE EES ALSO FEEKED TO BLOW UP! BUT HOW CAN WE FIND ZE ATOM BOMBS, BLACKHAWK?

THESE ARE OUR TWO IMPROVED GEIGER COUNTER DEVICES, ANDRE! WE'LL SPLIT UP AND SEARCH! YOU TAKE ONE PATROL, I'LL TAKE THE OTHER!



THE TWO PATROLS ROAM THE CITY TIRELESSLY, UNTIL...

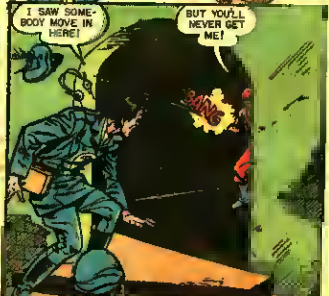
HOLD EVERYTHING! CLAP! THE COUNTER'S GIVING US A MESSAGE!

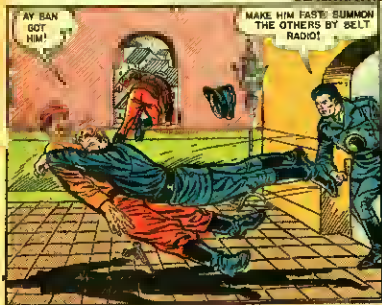
AT ONCE HEAR! LISTEN CHUCK! SOMETHING RADIOACTIVE NEARBY AT TANK!



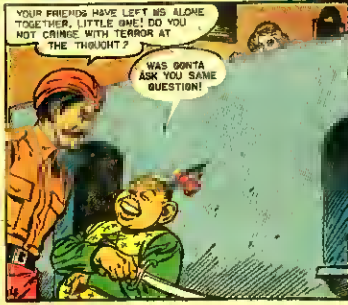
I SAW SOMEBODY MOVE IN HERE!

BUT YOU'LL NEVER GET ME!

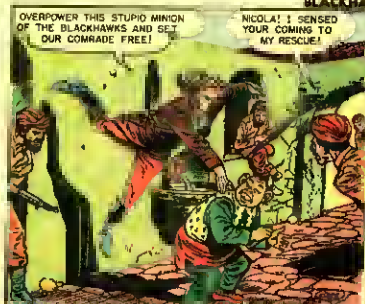




BUT WHEN THE BLACKHAWKS ASSEMBLE...



BLACKHAWK



OVERPOWER THIS STUPID MINION OF THE BLACKHAWKS AND SET OUR COMRADE FREE!

NICOLA! I SENSED YOUR COMING TO MY RESCUE!



THE TABLES ARE TURNED, LITTLE RAT! DO YOU KNOW ANY PRAYERS TO SAY BEFORE...

HAWKAAA!



ME KNOW WHEN BLACKHAWKS PRETEND TO LEAVE WE BRING YOU OUT OF HOLES!

MY GEIGER COUNTER SEEMS TO PERK UP WHEN THIS LADY IS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD!



STAY CLEAR OF ME, OR I'LL SCATTER YOUR BRAINS!

I'VE HEARD SO MANY ENEMIES SAY THOSE WORDS THAT THEY BORE ME!



LET ME GO!

NOT WHEN I'VE BEEN WORKING SO HARD TO FIND YOU. GOME BACK AND MEET A BUNCH OF FASCINATING MEN... THE BLACK-HAWKS!



ZEY RUN! AND ZE GEIGER COUNTER MAKES NO SOUND TO SNOW RADIO ACTIVITY!

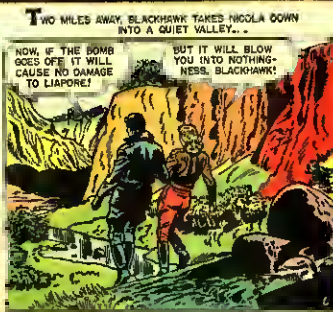
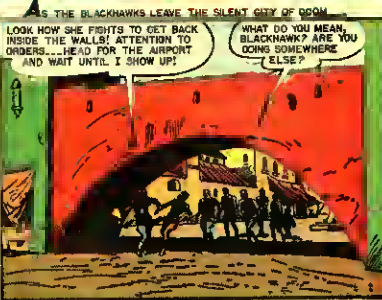
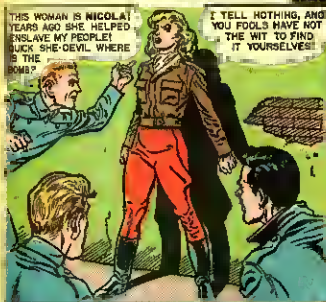
THIS LOVELY GUEST OF MINE WILL CHANGE THAT, ANDRE!



JAWOHL! NOW DER TICKING ISS LOUD! YE ARE NEAR DER BOMB!

I DEDUCE THAT THE LADY HERSELF IS A WALKING URANIUM DEPOSIT!

BLACKHAWK



BLACKHAWK

THAT AT LEAST WOULD BE WORTH DYING FOR, TO DESTROY BLACKHAWK, WHO HAS DEFIED MY COUNTRY AND CHIEF FOR SO LONG!

ONE BOMB, ONE MAN! YOUR OUT FIT CAN'T AFFORD THAT KIND OF TRADING! SIT DOWN!



BUT TO SEE THE END OF BLACKHAWK! AA! THEN YOUR BLUE-COATED BAND WOULD BE LEADERLESS! ... WOULD SCATTER!

IT WOULD SCATTER, BUT IT WOULDN'T BE LEADERLESS!



EVERY BLACKHAWK IS A LEADER! WITHOUT ME, THEY'D FORM NEW GROUPS, BRING THEM TOGETHER AND FIGHT WITH REDOUBLED STRENGTH!



LET ME GO! I MUST GET AWAY!

NO! I'M SORRY IF I BORE YOU, BUT YOU'RE STAYING WITH ME!



QUIT TALKING? AND YOU WANT TO GET OUT OF THAT JACKET! IT MUST CONTAIN THE BOMB POWER!

THE JACKET, AND MY BOOTS! HELP ME GET THEM OFF!



QUICK! LET US GO! THE BLAST WILL COME SOON!

THIS COUNTER SHOWS YOU JETTISONED YOUR BOMB LOAD IN THE VALLEY!



SUNDOWN, AND AT THE AIRPORT...

LOOK! ATOMIC EXPLOSION! I FEAR IT'S THE END OF OUR BRAVE BLACKHAWK!



BLACKHAWK



HE IS GOING TO DIE SO YOUNG... SO TERRIBLY... ACH, IT IS SO BAD!

CHEER UP, HENDRICKSON! I INTEND TO DIE OLD AND PEACEFULLY!



WE LEFT NICOLA'S BOMB TO EXPLODE HARMLESSLY IN THAT VALLEY! IT'LL BE RADIOACTIVE FOR AWHILE, BUT WE'LL WARN PEOPLE AWAY!

I HAVE SURRENDERED! I WANT TO CHANGE SIDES! MY BELIEFS CANNOT WIN AGAINST MEN LIKE YOU!



WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN OF OPERATION?

MY BOMB WAS TO SET OFF A MIGHTY STORE OF SMUGGLED EXPLOSIVES IN A CELLAR AT THE HEART OF THE CITY! I'LL LEAD YOU TO IT!



BLACKHAWK, MAYBE SHE'S FAKING! ARE YOU GOING TO LET HER LEAD US INTO A TRAP?

DON'T ACCUSE A LADY WITHOUT BEING SURE SHE'S TRYING TO TRAP YOU, CHUCK! TAKE US TO THAT CELLAR, NICOLA!



BACK INTO LIAPORE NICOLA LEADS HER CAPTORS!

THERE IS THE SECRET EXPLOSIVE CENTER! IT IS YOURS... GO TAKE IT!

YOU'VE LED US THIS FAR NICOLA! LEAD US THE REST OF THE WAY!



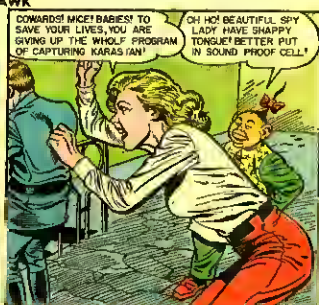
NO! NO! I WON'T GO FIRST!

THAT EXPLAINS YOUR TRICK! YOUR MEN ARE IN THAT CELLAR WITH THE EXPLOSIVES READY TO SHOOT ANYONE WHO ENTERS.

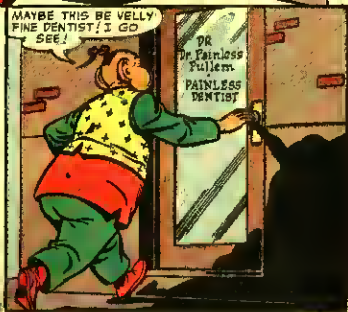


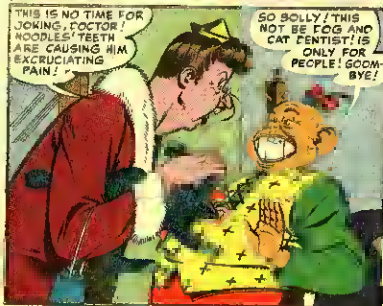
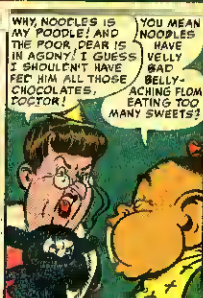
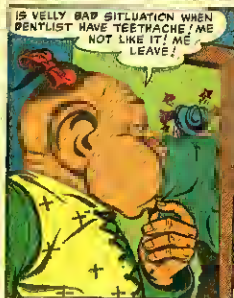
LISTEN DOWN THERE! I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE SECONDS TO COME OUT AND SURRENDER, OR I'LL FIRE THROUGH THE DOOR! AND THIS GUN HAS INCENDIARY BULLETS!

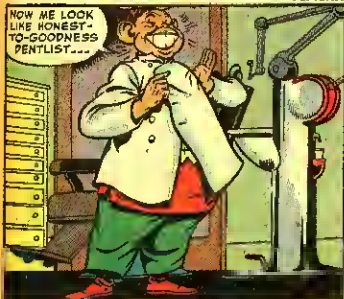
BLACKHAWK



CHOP CHOP



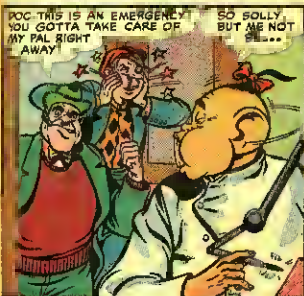




NOW ME LOOK
LIKE HONEST-
TO-GOODNESS
DENTIST....



IS VELLY EASY TO BE DENTIST!
IS ONLY NECESSARY TO SAY
"OPEN WIDE....THIS NOT
HURTEE ONE BIT!"
THEN YOU BE
DENTIST!



DOC THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!
YOU GOTTA TAKE CARE OF
MY PAL RIGHT
AWAY!

SO SORRY,
BUT ME NOT
P...



QUIT YOUR STALLING,
DOC! OR I'LL DRILL YOU!

OH, YOU KNOW HOW TO
DO DRILLING... IS
BETTER YOU FIX
FRIEND'S TEETH!



NOW MAKE IT
SNAPPY! WE'RE
ON THE LAM!
AND WE GOT
NO TIME TO
WASTE!

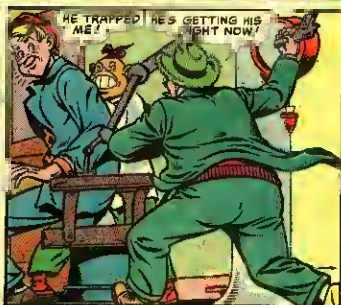
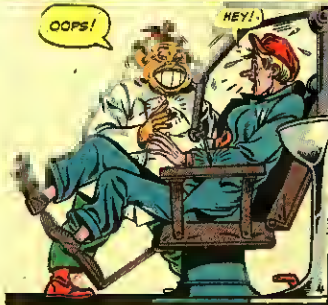
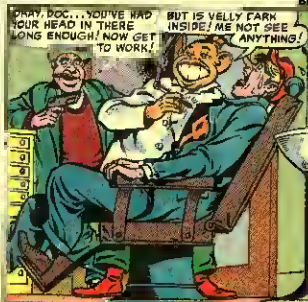
WHAT A PLEDICAMENT!
WHAT TO DO? WHAT
TO DO?

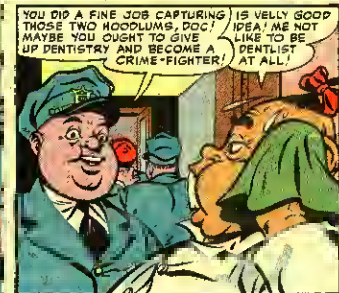
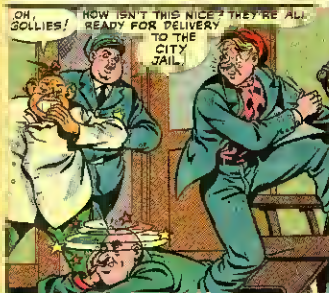
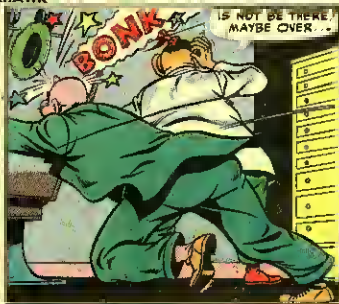
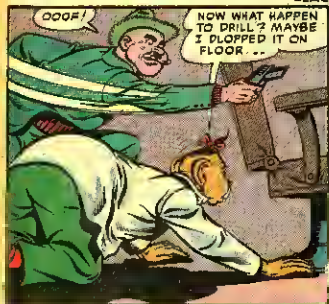


ME PLETEND TO
BE DENTIST! MAYBE
REAL DENTIST COME
BACK QUICK QUICK!
THEN EVERYTHING
BE HOTSY-TOTSY!

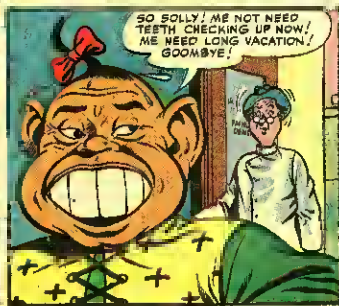


NOW OPEN WIDE...
THIS NOT HURTEE
ONE BIT!





And a few minutes later...



THE SLEEPMASTER

A TALL man, with drab gray hair and wearing a sombre suit, stood before a circle of hardened criminal henchmen. They were all experts, experts in their particular fields of nefarious skills, and they were banded together now in what was one of the strangest and yet, seemingly, most fool-proof schemes that any of them had ever heard of in all their years of underworld vice and corruption.

They knew the tall, dull-looking man only as The Sleepmaster, so-called by the very nature of his prodigious plan. And they also knew that, behind his cool countenance, there flamed a fiery hatred for mankind and a steel will for vengeance because he, too, had served time.

The Sleepmaster eyed them for a moment through scrutinizing, half-closed lids. When he spoke, it was curt and to the point!

"You all know what to do," he said. "One false move means curtains. We begin at Dockport, midnight tonight!"

He reached for his hat and a suitcase and walked out the door of the old farm house hide-out and to a large limousine which was waiting. The driver took him through the clearing, past the small improvised landing field where the planes and helicopters and the big balloon were hidden under camouflaged canopies, down the mountain through the dense timberland, and to the nearest town and commercial airport. The Sleepmaster boarded a plane and soon was on his way to Dockport.

The next morning, the entire nation was shocked by mysterious newspaper headlines! MIDNIGHT MARAUDER ROBS DOCKPORT! said one. Another read: DOCKPORT RAIDED AS CITY SLEEPS! And still another: NO WITNESSES TO DOCKPORT PLUNDER! It was weird, that the small city could be ransacked and its banks and stores robbed without the slightest clue or without any person, even a night watchman, knowing how or when it happened.

In Dockport, The Sleepmaster read a full account of the night's puzzling proceedings and was reassured that his men worked well together and that his die plan was, indeed, perfect.

At police headquarters, the chief was in a frenzy as he paced up and down before members of his night force. "What in tarnation were you all doing?" he screamed. "Your job's to pro-

tect this town, not to sit back and let some infernal mob come in and clean it out. Were you paid off? Or is it possible that every one of you goes to sleep on his beat?"

"Fact is, Chief," spoke up one of the patrolmen, "I did sort of go to sleep. Kinda blacked-out for a minute. Felt fuzzy afterward."

"Me, too!" agreed another. "I went to sleep, I'll admit. I looked at my watch after I woke up and I'd slept for thirty minutes. Couldn't understand it."

Hours of quizzing, accusing and condemning revealed only one sure thing to the Chief. Every man actually had gone to sleep on his beat. Of course, he had been asleep at the time, too, but that was as it should be since he always hit his bed at eleven.

Back at the mountain hide-out, The Sleepmaster praised his men. "Good work," he assured them. "I picked each one of you because you were sure and fast. You can see it paid off." And he pointed to the piles of bills and currency and slightly smiled.

"As soon as this cools down a little, we'll take Oreville. First, I'll case the place and pick out the tallest building or the one best suited for landing. Oreville's like Dockport—not big, but wealthy. Should give us a good haul."

Oreville was next. Then town after town fell under the strange spell and awoke to find its bank vaults empty and its safes cracked and their contents missing. People were in a panic. Every member of law enforcement, from the lowest to the highest ranks, was alerted. But while they watched and searched and pondered, The Sleepmaster and his master crew grew rich and increasingly more confident.

"Our money is now way up in the millions," The Sleepmaster told them one day. "There's enough to keep us all going for the rest of our lives. One more job—then it's quits. Tonight we take the richest little town in the country and the one nearest here, Silver Center."

If a young aviation enthusiast, Bob Riley, had not been coming home in his private plane late that night, the mystery might never have been solved. He was surprised when he saw, silhouetted ahead of him, a plane throwing out smoke like a screen, only in small puffs so that it resembled

close, low-flying clouds. He circled to watch, as the plane finished its work, turned, and sped away. Then he stared at what appeared to be a monster coming toward him. He veered to get a better view and, at the same time, not be noticed himself. It was a large balloon, with dangling tentacles waving in the wind, making it resemble a hideous flying octopus. It dropped its altitude so that its belly scraped the formations of low-hanging clouds. And it was heading directly for the town!

Then another strange thing happened. Out of the blue-black sky came two helicopters. No one in Silver Center owned helicopters. He watched as they made a landing and his acquaintance with his home town assured him that they had landed on the Arden Hotel, the tallest building and the only one which would have a roof large enough to accommodate such a feat.

"Shall I go down and see what it's all about?" he questioned himself. "By the time I get there, they might be gone."

Then, for the first time, he remembered the stories of the midnight marauders. "All the peculiar plundering that's been going on. I wonder —"

He looked at his gas gauge. There was fuel enough to keep him in the air for over an hour. He decided to stay up there and watch.

Vaguely, in the darkness, he saw the balloon head back toward the West. Approximately half an hour later, he detected the outline of the helicopters, following in the same direction like large flying insects in the moonless night.

"I can't let them out of my sight," he breathed to himself. "I have to find out where they land!"

He flew high and watched them come down on the nearby mountain. He hoped they had not seen him. He recorded the location and then turned and flew as fast as he could back to Silver Center. He tried to get a signal through to the airport but, for several minutes, there was no reply. At last, a sleepy and dazed voice came through his earphones.

"Okay! All clear! Er . . . come in on runway three! Over!"

"Now at one thousand feet. Coming in on runway three. Roger!"

Bob Riley brought his plane in for a safe but hurried landing and raced to his car which he had left parked there. He broke all the speed laws, getting to the police station. As he entered, he saw the night sergeant, getting up from his desk, looking groggy and yawning.

"I saw them," Riley shouted. "I saw the planes come and land here and I watched where they went afterwards! We'll get those crooks now and—"

"Crooks? Wh-what are you talking about?" asked the blinking sergeant. "What planes? Gosh, I feel dizzy. Must be sick!"

"Look," said Riley, impatiently, "this town's been raided like the others. I'd bet my bottom dollar on it. Go out on the street and—"

He was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone. From then on, the line was kept busy as bewildered cops on their beats awoke to find stores broken into and looted.

Bob Riley went with an officer to the roof of the Arden Hotel where a flashlight search proved he had been right about the helicopters' landing place—the tracks were barely visible. Soon the word spread of what had happened in Silver Center. By three a.m., the town was in an uproar!

The next morning, Bob Riley was standing in the hotel and talking to the desk clerk when a tall man, with gray hair and wearing a sombre suit, approached and asked to check out. "Is it true," asked The Sleepmaster, "that this town was looted last night by that mysterious mob?"

Riley was leaving then and the clerk pointed to him as he answered. "Yes, but we're not worried now. That fellow there spotted the planes and knows where they landed! The law'll have 'em before the day's over!"

The Sleepmaster checked out, took a cab to the airport, and was picked up there by one of his private planes. He would not have returned to the hide-out, except that all the money was there.

"No time to lose," he panted, as he rushed into the old house. "They've spotted us! Get the money to the planes and let's clear out fast."

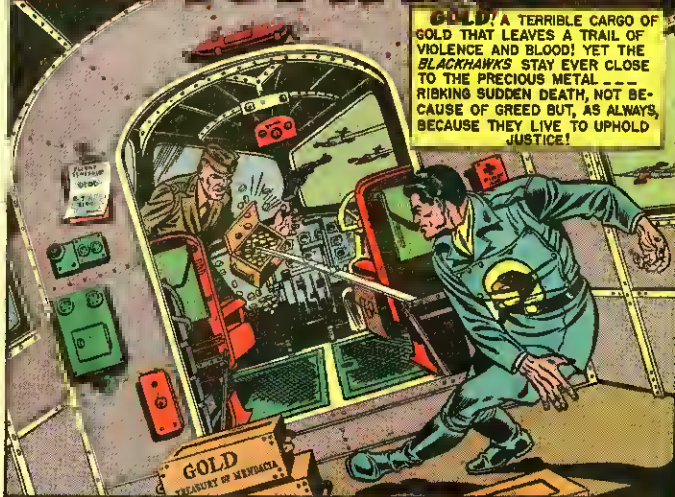
He and his criminal cohorts were ready for the get-away when planes closed in from above and cars came through the clearing and they were surrounded and trapped on the mountain top!

The story was soon told! The Sleepmaster always registered at the best hotel under an alias. He cased the town and got word to his men. First, a plane left smoke clouds, then the weird balloon poured sleeping gas down over the city, then the helicopters landed with heinous crafts-men who plied their trade swiftly while the city slept.

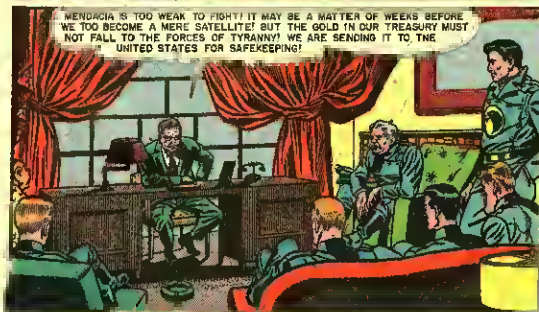
The next morning, a nation was deeply relieved as the newspapers carried such headlines as these: **MYSTERY OF LOOTING SOLVED! BOB RILEY TRAILS SKY RAIDERS! and THE SLEEPMASTER CONFESSES!**

BLACKHAWK

GOLD! A TERRIBLE CARGO OF GOLD THAT LEAVES A TRAIL OF VIOLENCE AND BLOOD! YET THE BLACKHAWKS STAY EVER CLOSE TO THE PRECIOUS METAL --- RISKING SUDDEN DEATH, NOT BECAUSE OF GREED BUT, AS ALWAYS, BECAUSE THEY LIVE TO UPHOLD JUSTICE!



MENDACIA IS TOO WEAK TO FIGHT! IT MAY BE A MATTER OF WEEKS BEFORE WE TOO BECOME A MERE SATELLITE! BUT THE GOLD IN OUR TREASURY MUST NOT FALL TO THE FORCES OF TYRANNY! WE ARE SENDING IT TO THE UNITED STATES FOR SAFEKEEPING!



WE HAVE TAKEN EVERY PRECAUTION TO KEEP THE OPERATION A SECRET! STILL, WE KNEW THAT ONLY MEN LIKE THE BLACKHAWKS COULD REALLY INSURE ITS SAFE ARRIVAL! WE BEG YOU TO GUARD IT WELL!

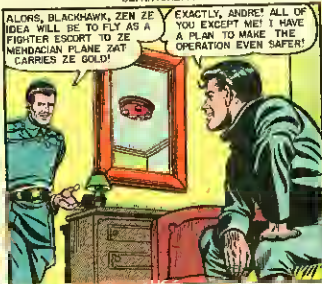
YOU CAN DEPEND ON US, SIR!



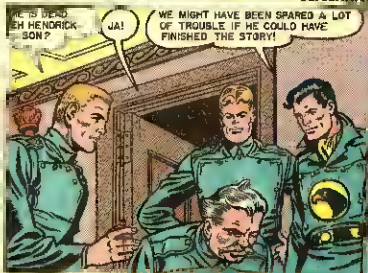
BLACKHAWK



AT THE BLACKHAWKS' HOTEL THE NIGHT BEFORE THEIR DEPARTURE...



BLACKHAWK



MAYBE I SHOULD OBEY BLACKHAWK BUT I JUST CAN'T LET YOU TAKE YOUR CHANCES HERE! LISTEN! I'M GOING TO HIDE YOU IN MY PLANE IN THE MORNING! BUT YOU MUST BE CAREFUL THAT MY BUDDIES DON'T SEE YOU! BY THE WAY, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

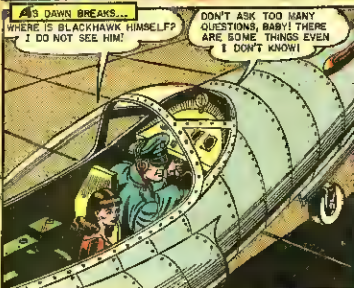
MAIA! OH, YOU ARE SO KIND!



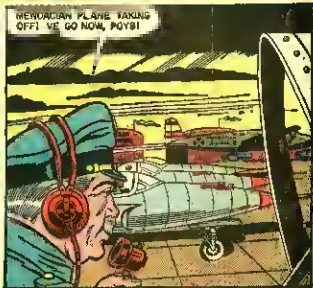
AS DAWN BREAKS...

WHERE IS BLACKHAWK HIMSELF? I DO NOT SEE HIM!

DON'T ASK TOO MANY QUESTIONS, BABY! THERE ARE SOME THINGS EVEN I DON'T KNOW!



RENOVACIAN PLANE TAKING OFF! WE GO NOW, BOYS!



THE HOURS TICK SLOWLY BY!

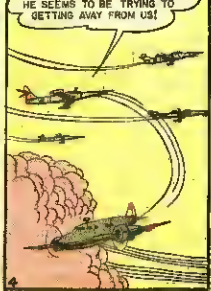


THEN...

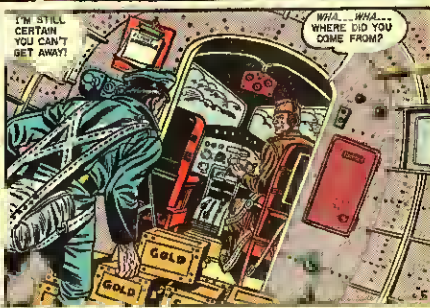
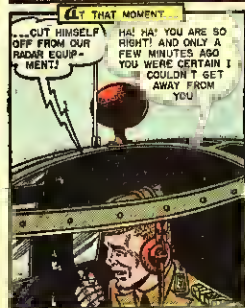
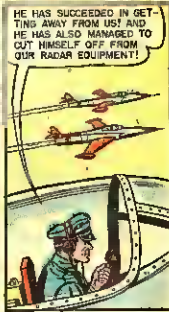
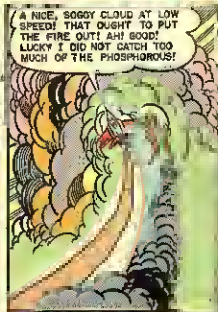
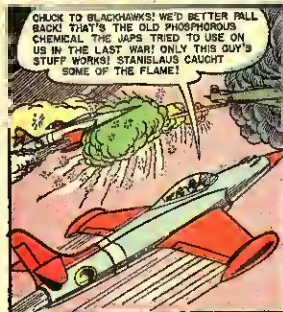
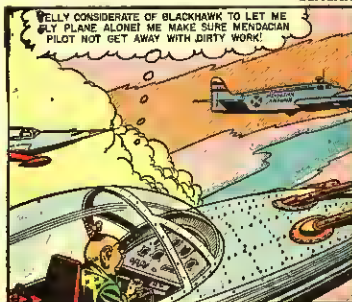
CHUCK TO PILOT OF MENDACIAN CRAFT! YOU'RE GOING OFF COURSE! CHUCK TO BLACK HAWKS! AM I RIGHT?



CLAF TO CHUCK! JA, PY YIMINY! HE SEEMS TO BE TRYING TO GETTING AWAY FROM US!



BLACKHAWK



WHA... WHA...
WHERE DID YOU
COME FROM?

GOLD
GOLD

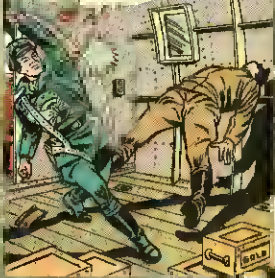
BLACKHAWK

"I'LL TAKE OVER NOW, WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PILOT WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO FLY THIS SHIP?"

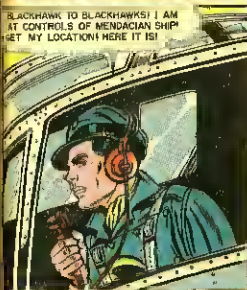
"OH-OH! DON'T! YOU'LL BREAK MY NECK! WE KILLED THAT PILOT!"



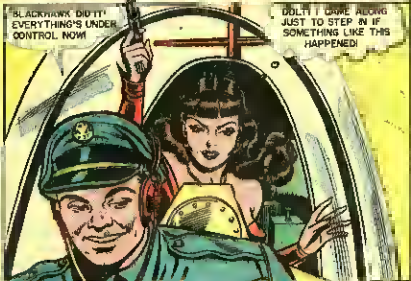
"YOU'LL ANSWER FOR THAT TOO! MEANWHILE YOU CAN TAKE A QUIET NAP FOR THE REST OF THE TRIP!"



"BLACKHAWK TO BLACKHAWKS! I AM AT CONTROLS OF MENDACIAN SHIP! GET MY LOCATION! HERE IT IS!"

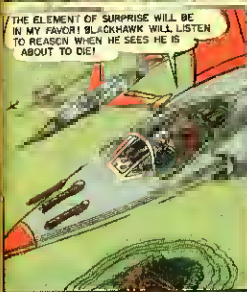


"BLACKHAWK DITTY! EVERYTHING'S UNDER CONTROL NOW!"



"DITTY! I GIVE ALONG JUST TO STEP IN IF SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED!"

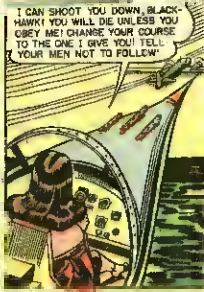
"THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE WILL BE IN MY FAVOR! BLACKHAWK WILL LISTEN TO REASON WHEN HE SEES HE IS ABOUT TO DIE!"

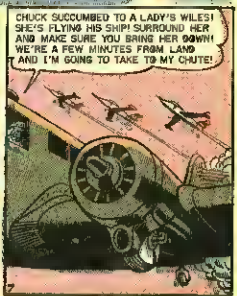
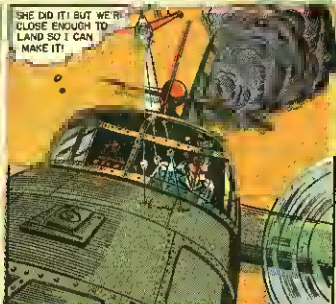
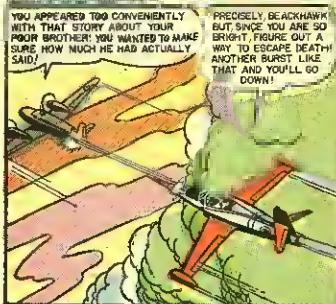
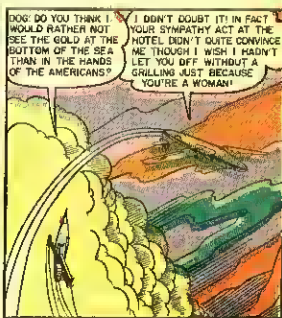
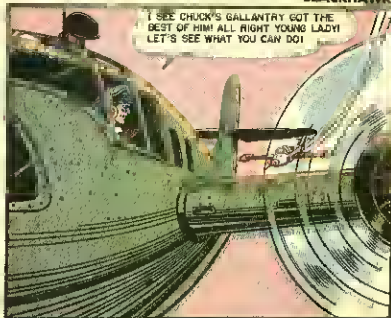


"ZUT! CHUCK HAS HIS PLANE WIDE OPEN! WHY SO FAST?"



"I CAN SHOOT YOU DOWN, BLACKHAWK! YOU WILL DIE UNLESS YOU OBEY ME! CHANGE YOUR COURSE TO THE ONE I GIVE YOU! TELL YOUR MEN NOT TO FOLLOW!"

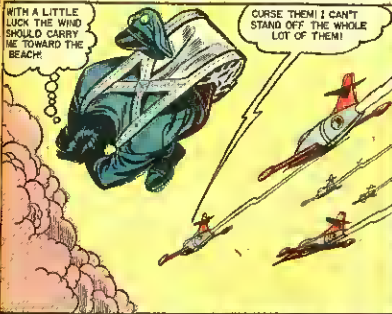




CHUCK SUCCEMDED TO A LADY'S WILES! SHE'S FLYING HIS SHIP! SURROUND HER AND MAKE SURE YOU BRING HER DOWN! WE'RE A FEW MINUTES FROM LAND AND I'M GOING TO TAKE TO MY CHUTE!

BLACKHAWK

WITH A LITTLE LUCK THE WIND SHOULD CARRY ME TOWARD THE BEACH!

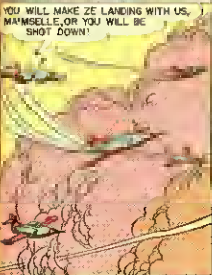


CURSE THEM! I CAN'T STAND OFF THE WHOLE LOT OF THEM!

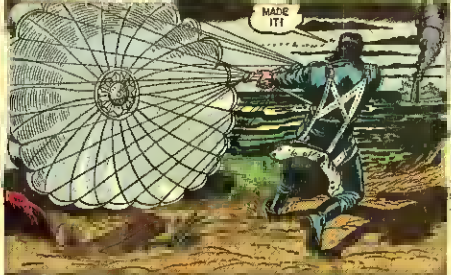
I'M BEING CARRIED LANDWARD!



YOU WILL MAKE ZE LANDING WITH US, I MA'NSELLE, OR YOU WILL BE SHOT DOWN!

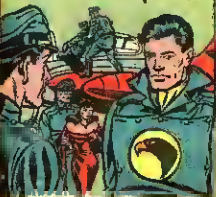


MADE IT!



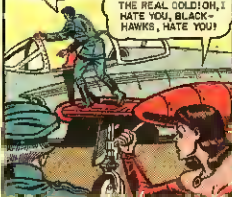
BUT, BLACKHAWK, I DO NOT UNDERSTAND! ZE GOLD WAS ON ZE MENDACIAN PLANE! EVEN WITH YOUR TAIL AFIRE YOU MIGHT HAVE MADE ZE CRASH LANDING AND SAVED IT!

I WOULD HAVE, ANDRE, IF IT HAD BEEN NECESSARY!



BUT THE REAL GOLD WAS HIDDEN UNDER THE SEAT IN CHUCK'S PLANE ALL THE TIME! YOU SEE, I HAD TO MAKE DOUBLY SURE OF EVERYTHING! WE MERELY ESCORTED THE MENDACIAN PLANE WITH THE FAKE GOLD BOXES TO KEEP THE TRAITORS OFF THE REAL TRACK!

AND...AND I COULD HAVE FLOWN TO SAFETY IN THE PLANE THAT CARRIED THE REAL GOLD! OH, I HATE YOU, BLACK-HAWKS, HATE YOU!



I'M SORRY I WAS SUCH A FOOL, BLACK-HAWK!

FORGET IT, CHUCK! IT TURNED OUT ALL RIGHT! ALL SHE SUCCEEDED IN DOING WAS SHOOTING DOWN ONE OF HER FELLOW TRAITORS AND GETTING HERSELF CAUGHT!

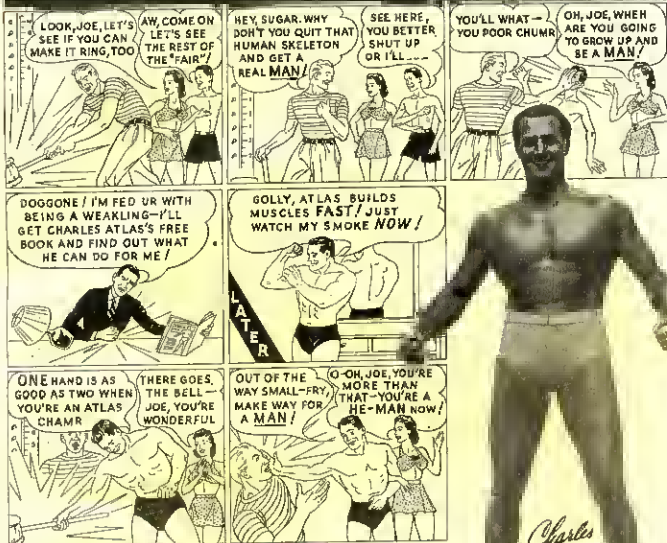


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